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General synthesis, structure, and optical properties of benzothiophene-fused benzoheteroles containing Group 15 and 16 elements



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ABSTRACT

A series of benzothieno[3,2-*b*]benzoheteroles containing Group 15 (N, P, As, and Sb) and Group 16 (O, S, Se, and Te) elements were synthesized by a versatile method. X-ray analyses revealed that all the tetracyclic heteroacene skeletons were planar. A linear relationship was found between the excitation energies of Group 16-heteroacenes and their atomic radius, in contrast to Group 15-heteroacenes. Density functional theory calculations and electrochemical measurements were performed to understand the structure—optical property relationship.

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1. Introduction

Linearly fused heteroacenes are attracting increasing interest owing to their intriguing potential for application in organic semiconductors for organic field-effect transistors (OFETs).¹ Among them, benzothieno[3,2-*b*]benzothiophene and its derivatives (**I**) have been widely investigated, leading to the development of highperformance organic semiconductors.^{1C,e,2} In connection with these studies, the benzothiophene-fused benzoheteroles (**II**), such as nitrogen (M=N-R'),³ phosphorus (M=P-R'),^{3d,4} oxygen (M=O),⁵ and selenium (M=Se)^{1C,e,2,6} derivatives, have been sporadically prepared to develop synthetic routes and investigate their fundamental, electrochemical, and electronic device properties (Fig. 1). However, to the best of our knowledge, comprehensive synthesis of these heteroacenes has never been carried out. We have been extensively working on the development of novel synthetic methodologies for a library of heterocycles containing Group 15 (N, P, As, and Sb) and Group 16 (O, S, Se, and Te) elements, and have already reported the synthesis and physical properties of 1-benzo [*b*]heteroles containing a series of Group 15 and 16 elements.⁷ In these articles, replacement of the Group 16 heteroatom leads to a considerable spectral shift, depending on the size of the heteroatom. Here, we report a convergent synthesis of benzothiophene-fused tetracyclic heteroacenes⁸ and a detailed comparison of the molecular structures and optical properties of the obtained heteroacenes. For the Group 15-heteroacenes, 10-phenyl derivatives were targeted because of the stability and handling ability.





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2. Results and discussion

The established convergent synthetic routes to benzothiophene-fused benzoheteroles **3** are shown in Scheme **1**. The key precursors **2a** and **2b** were synthesized by I_2 - and Br_2 -mediated electrophilic cyclization of simple diphenyl acetylenes **1a** and **1b**, respectively.⁹ When **1a** was reacted with Br_2 , the desired 2-halophenyl benzofuran derivative was not obtained but the triple bond underwent bromine addition to form a 1,2-dibromoalkene. Compound **2** was treated with *n*- or *t*-BuLi in anhydrous diethyl ether under an argon atmosphere, followed by trapping of the

dilithio intermediate with an electrophilic reagent, which resulted in ring closure to afford a range of the desired benzothiophenefused benzoheteroles (**3b**–**h**) in moderate yields. Indole derivative **3a** was synthesized by the reaction of **2b** and aniline in the presence of Pd₂(dba)₃ and tri-*tert*-butylphosphonium tetrafluoroborate at 125 °C.¹⁰

We successfully obtained single crystals of all the heteroacenes and then carried out X-ray analysis.^{2e,11} Selected bond lengths and angles are summarized in the Supplementary data, and the ORTEP drawings are provided in Fig. 2. Fig. 2 clearly shows that the tetracyclic skeletons are planar. As expected, with the increase in the



Scheme 1. Synthesis of benzothiophene-fused benzoheteroles. For **3a**; method A. aniline (0.5 mmol), **2b** (0.55 mmol), Pd₂(dba)₃ (22 mol %), P(*t*-Bu)₃HBF₄ (22 mol %), *t*-BuONa (1.7 mmol), and toluene (5 mL) at 125 °C. For **3b**–d and **f**–h; method B. **2b** (2.0 mmol), *n*-BuLi (2.4 equiv), Group 15 or 16 reagent (4 mmol), and diethyl ether (40 mL), at –20 °C to rt. For **3e**; method B. **2a** (2.0 mmol), *t*-BuLi (4 equiv), (PhSO₂)₂S (4 mmol), and diethyl ether (30 mL), at –78 °C to rt.



Fig. 2. Top views (top) and side views (bottom) of 3 in the solid state (50% probability level); the disordered atoms and hydrogen atoms are omitted for clarity. One of two geometries in the unit cell was drawn for 3d.

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